

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
USIA-06 OIC-02 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03
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DRAFTED BY NEA/AFN:STESCUDERO/NH

APPROVED BY E:MR. COOPER

NEA:NAVELIOTES

S/S:MR. SEBASTIAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 096444

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, ECON, ECIN, EAID, TS, US

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY COOPER'S MEETING WITH TUNISIAN
PLANNING MINISTER MUSTAPHA ZAAOUNI

1. UNDER SECRETARY FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, RICHARD N. COOPER,
MET BRIEFLY WITH PLANNING MINISTER ZAAOUNI AND TUNISIAN
AMBASSADOR ALI HEDDA TUESDAY, APRIL 26. CONVERSATION
LIMITED ESSENTIALLY TO JULY 6 MEETING OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP
OF AID DONORS AND MATTERS RELATED TO NORTH-SOUTH QUESTIONS.

2. CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING: IN RESPONSE TO SEVERAL
QUESTIONS, ZAAOUNI STATED TUNISIA HAD ATTAINED 6 PERCENT
ANNUAL GROWTH UNDER FORMER FIVE YEAR PLAN AND NEW PLAN,
WHICH WILL BE UNVEILED AT JULY 6 MEETING OF CONSULTATIVE
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GROUP OF AID DONORS IN TUNIS, WILL AIM FOR 7.5 PERCENT AND
FULL EMPLOYMENT. ONE QUARTER OF PLANNED DOLS 10 BILLION
INVESTMENT DURING NEXT FIVE YEAR PLAN TO COME FROM FOREIGN
SOURCES: 25 PERCENT OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT WILL COME FROM
PRIVATE SOURCES, 25 PERCENT FROM COMMERCIAL BANK SOURCES
AND 50 PERCENT FROM FOREIGN PUBLIC SOURCES. ANNOUNCEMENT
OF NEW PLAN IS REASON WHY CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING FOR

FIRST TIME IN TUNIS AND GOT HOPEFUL U.S. WILL SEND STRONG

FORCEFUL DELEGATION WHICH WILL TAKE THE LEAD IN SUPPORT FOR AID TO TUNISIA AND, IN SO DOING, CONVINCE OTHER DONORS TO FOLLOW SUIT.

3. MR. COOPER, DESCRIBING TUNISIAN ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE OVER PAST FIFTEEN YEARS AS INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS STORY, REMARKED THAT 7.5 PERCENT GROWTH RATE SHOULD BE POSSIBLE IF WORLD ECONOMY GOES WELL IN NEXT FIVE YEARS, ESPECIALLY AS GOT WAS ABLE TO SUSTAIN 6 PERCENT RATE DURING PAST DIFFICULT FIVE YEARS. U.S. WILL DO WHAT IT CAN AT JULY 6 MEETING.

4. NORTH-SOUTH: UNDER SECRETARY COOPER BROACHED SUBJECT OF CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (CIEC) WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS PHASE OF NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE WHICH WE HOPE WILL END SUCCESSFULLY, LEADING TO FURTHER FRUITFUL DIALOGUE. FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW AS SOMEONE NEW TO GOVERNMENT, PAST TWO YEARS CHARACTERIZED BY REMARKABLE PROGRESS ON NORTH-SOUTH MATTERS, ALTHOUGH GAP BETWEEN HIGHEST EXPECTATIONS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS IS STILL GREAT. U.S. HOPES REMAINING GAP DOES NOT CAUSE DISCOURAGEMENT AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND COUNTS ON TUNISIA AND GROUP OF 19 TO HELP AVOID CONFRONTATION.

5. ZAAOUNI AND HEDDA EXPRESSED HOPE U.S. AND TUNISIA WILL BE ON SAME SIDE IN NORTH-SOUTH DISCUSSIONS. THEY THEN CHARACTERIZED NORTH-SOUTH COMPETITION AS SUBORDINATE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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EAST-WEST COMPETITION AND WENT ON TO MAKE CASE FOR WESTERN SUPPORT OF MODERATE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BASED ON NEED TO DEMONSTRATE TO THIRD WORLD ECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY OF WESTERN SYSTEMS. HEDDA COMPARED LIBYA, WEALTHY RADICAL COUNTRY WHOSE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL POLICIES ARE FAILING, TO TUNISIA WHICH, THOUGH POOR, IS FAR MORE SUCCESSFUL. SUCH COMPARISONS OFFER OBJECT LESSONS FOR OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. ZAAOUNI MENTIONED POLITICAL PROBLEM WITH LIBYA, NOTING THAT TRIPOLI HAD VIOLATED SIGNED AGREEMENT TO TAKE CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE TO INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE. PLANNING MINISTER ALSO EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GOT COULD CONTINUE TO COUNT ON U.S. ASSISTANCE VIS-A-VIS LIBYA.

6. COOPER REPLIED THAT U.S. WOULD CONTINUE TO GIVE SUCH ASSISTANCE WHERE POSSIBLE. UNDER SECRETARY ALSO EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF TUNISIAN VIEWPOINT ON NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES.

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